

Blackfish Lake Ferry Site  
Name of Property

St. Francis County, Arkansas  
County and State

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## 8. Statement of Significance

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Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: Statewide.

Applicable National Register Criteria: A

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): NA

Areas of Significance: Ethnic Heritage: Native American  
Exploration/Settlement  
Transportation

Period(s) of Significance: ca. 1830-1838

Significant Dates: NA

Significant Person(s): NA

Cultural Affiliation: NA

Architect/Builder: William D. Ferguson, builder

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above:

### SUMMARY:

The Blackfish Lake Ferry Site is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A with statewide significance by virtue of its status as the sole known surviving ferry site along the Memphis to Little Rock Road traversed by the Bell Detachment during the Cherokee Removal. Its association with the earlier Choctaw, Creek and Chickasaw Removals augment its importance, as does its role in the opening of eastern Arkansas as a means of westward emigration. The property is being submitted for National Register recognition under the multiple-property listing "Historic and Archeological Resources Associated with the Cherokee Trail of Tears."

### ELABORATION:

## Construction of the Military Road

The Memphis to Little Rock Road, also known as the Military Road, was authorized on January 31, 1824, when the U.S. Congress passed an act for construction of a road opposite Memphis, Tennessee, through the swamps of east Arkansas to the territorial capital of Arkansas at Little Rock.<sup>1</sup> Surveyors Joseph Paxton and Thomas Mathers and Memphis contractor Anderson B. Carr were hired to lay out a route for the proposed road.<sup>2</sup> Paxton and Mathers (Carr resigned from the team amid disagreement with the others about the best route to follow in crossing the White River) reported to Secretary of War John C. Calhoun on February 12, 1825, that they had selected the best possible route through eastern Arkansas, including a description of Blackfish Lake east of Crowley's Ridge and a recommendation that a ferry be established to cross it:

“Blackfish – this stream has been considered the great obstacle in the forming of this road, and we believe in any other way than that on which we have conducted it would render it impracticable – This stream takes its rise in a large number of Cypress lakes, Ponds &<sup>e</sup> in the high lands bordering on an outlet to the Mississippi into the Saint Francis – It drains a large portion of this insulated Country – In wet seasons it contains a vast quantity of water, which owing to the flatness of the Country, inundates a large Space at Such times rendering it almost impassible. Where we desire the road to cross, it forms itself into an immense [sic] lake with high banks, Sufficent to Contain all the Surplus water of wet Seasons without inundation – Thus, by establishing a ferry across Blackfish lake the great obstacle to this road vanishes.”<sup>3</sup>

Lt. Frederick L. Griffith was appointed superintendent of the Memphis to Little Rock Road on January 27, 1826, with instructions to make a road “at least twenty four feet wide throughout” with all timber and brush removed and stumps cut as low as possible, marshes and swamps to be “causewayed with poles or split timber,” and ditches four feet wide and three feet deep to be dug on either side of the road. “The hills on the route are to be dug down and wound round in such a manner as to make them practicable for carriages or loaded wagons,” Griffith was instructed.<sup>4</sup>

Griffith advertised for contractors for the first section of the road, receiving criticism that Arkansas citizens were not informed and given an opportunity to bid on the road project.<sup>5</sup> The *Arkansas Gazette* reported on July 25, 1826, that Griffith “entered into private contracts with Messrs. A. Carr, N. Anderson and W. Irwin of Memphis, for opening 60 miles of the road, commencing at the point where the road leaves the Mississippi, four miles above Memphis, at the rate of \$160 per mile, with considerable deviation from the original proposals; and for the four miles immediately above Memphis, with a Mr. Hunt, also of Tennessee. The 64 miles which have thus been contracted for will open the road nearly to Bayou de View. The work is to be commenced in September, and completed in January next.”<sup>6</sup> This contract also spent everything remaining from the Congressional appropriation for building the entire Memphis to Little Rock Road. The first section of the road was finished and the second section started by September 14, 1826. Lt. Charles Thomas replaced Griffith as superintendent on the project in October 1826.<sup>7</sup>

Thomas, too, reported on the necessity of a ferry across Blackfish Lake, writing to Quartermaster General Thomas S. Jesup on November 23, 1826:

“[T]he third contract and part of the fourth runs through a complete wilderness entirely uninhabited, crosses Blackfish, Shell and Bevans lakes at St. Francis River, at all of which ferrys must be established previous to the road’s being traveled as they are wide and entirely too deep to be forded, or bridged except by floating bridges. Ferries will not be established before that time, the land is the property of the United States and will be offered for sale in December next at which time the sites will no doubt be purchased and ferrys established and until such sale & purchase no one will engage in it.”<sup>8</sup>

Despite problems with the health of workers in swampy eastern Arkansas, Thomas reported to Jesup on January 17, 1827, that Carr was making good progress on his road contract, which was to continue to the 64<sup>th</sup> mile from the Mississippi River, located west of the Languille River.<sup>9</sup> The lieutenant complained bitterly of the Paxton and Mathers report, reporting inaccuracies in both their blazing of the trail and their description of the land through which it passed. “For instance,” Thomas complained, “they ‘positively aver’ after crossing the Saint Francis ‘that the road will no where be subject to inundation from any river &c’ when they were informed by persons well acquainted with the country & it is also evident from the water marks on the trees, that the county is subject to be overflowed in some places as much as eight feet and by the Mississippi & St. Francis Rivers.”<sup>10</sup> While Blackfish and Shell Lakes could be traversed by ferries, Thomas concluded that the areas west of the ridge around Bayou de View and the Cache River were impenetrable and that a new route would be needed to reach the crossing of the White River.<sup>11</sup>

While seeking approval for the change in the route, Thomas went ahead and contracted for 15 miles of road to be built between Little Rock and Bayou Two Prairie near present-day Lonoke.<sup>12</sup> After the route change was approved, Thomas contracted with William Strong to bridge the Languille River and build the road from the 64<sup>th</sup> mile to the White River ferry at present-day Clarendon.<sup>13</sup> Strong had established a home at the eastern base of Crowley’s Ridge in 1827, constructing a house that was “four stories high, contained 20 rooms, with a veranda extending entirely around it, supported by red cedar posts, eight inches in diameter ... It was the largest and most costly of any structure in the State at that time.”<sup>14</sup> The pioneer obviously planned to profit from the traffic that would traverse the only road between the territorial capital at Little Rock and Memphis.

Strong bid \$1,600 to “open the road from the sixty fourth mile to White River in 93 ½ mile” in January 1828 and Thomas reported that he had completed the rugged stretch by June 1, 1828.<sup>15</sup> Carr also finished his contracts by mid-1828, including the section that traversed Crowley’s Ridge above Strong’s place.<sup>16</sup> By the end of August, the remaining sections between White River and Little Rock were completed and Little Rock and Memphis were connected.<sup>17</sup> Thomas, tired of the heat and swamps of Arkansas, requested transfer to a northern post; instead, he was posted to fight Seminole Indians in Florida.<sup>18</sup>

Though finished, the road faced harsh treatment, particularly in its eastern reaches, which were subject to severe flooding and were indeed impassable for several months each year. In 1832, Samuel Dickins and six other Arkansians petitioned Congress to repair the road, which would encourage settlement and protect local residents from Indian attack.<sup>19</sup> On July 3, 1832, Congress appropriated \$20,000 for repairs to the Memphis to Little Rock Road, with Territorial Governor John Pope using the money to improve the road between Little

Rock and Strong's. More congressional funding was sought for the more extensive work needed on the eastern reaches of the road, and Congress appropriated \$100,000 and ordered a new survey of the road from Memphis to Strong's.<sup>20</sup>

Lt. Alexander H. Bowman was the third subaltern to tackle the difficult route through east Arkansas, arriving in Memphis in June 1834 with instructions to make contracts for improvements on the road between "a point on the Mississippi River, opposite Memphis, and terminat[ing] at the house of Wm Strong on St. Francis." Bowman requested and in late 1835 received permission to construct an embankment "twenty four feet wide at the top, with suitable slopes, which shall be three feet above highest water" in the first four miles of the road, "creating a continuous levee, from the bank opposite Memphis to the highlands on the South Side of Grandee lake." After one contractor abandoned the project after three-quarters of his 300-man crew fell ill in the July heat, Bowman hired a second contractor who used oxen and scrapers to create the embankment.<sup>21</sup> Though the initial miles opposite Memphis proved difficult, 23 miles of the road were completed by November 1834. After Arkansas became a state on June 15, 1836, Bowman was transferred to other duties as maintenance of the road became a local, as opposed to a federal, concern. During the years of federal involvement, it should be noted, Congress spent \$267,000 of the \$660,000 appropriated for territorial Arkansas's transportation needs on construction of the Memphis to Little Rock Road.<sup>22</sup> The eastern section of the road would continue to suffer the effects of persistent flooding for years to come, with the *Arkansas Gazette* observing in 1837 that "Emigrants continue to flock to this part of the country but they do so at the risk and cost of passing the most disgraceful bogs, wilderness, and swamps that can be found." The newspaper also advertised on May 23, 1837, that "the contractor on the Memphis and Little Rock Road (Wm. Strong, Esq.) advertises for one thousand laborers to go on that road for purposes of its completion."<sup>23</sup> For all intents and purposes, however, the road that would later become part of the Cherokee Trail of Tears between Memphis and Little Rock was complete.

Though this study focuses on the road's importance to the Cherokee Removal, the building of the Memphis to Little Rock Road also opened an overland route between the Mississippi River and the state capital, the importance of which led the *Gazette* to observe: "We venture to assert that there is no one single subject of so much importance to Arkansas as the having of good roads from the interior of the country, to the Mississippi river."<sup>24</sup> Fifty-three years later, the writers of *The Goodspeed Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Eastern Arkansas* acknowledged the road's impact:

In 1832, the United States Government constructed a road west from Memphis to Little Rock, over which they moved the Indians from the States east of the Mississippi River. . . and immediately after its construction [it] became the grand highway for emigration for western points. This was the only passage through the Wilderness, as the Mississippi bottoms were called at that time, and Texas received its flood of pioneers from over this highway, as did Kansas, Nebraska and Western Missouri; so from the time of its completion till 1860 there was hardly a day of any month in all those years, but what, from any point along its path, long trains of wagons could be seen slowly wending their way beneath the overhanging trees, and through the swamps that often lay for many miles along their track.<sup>25</sup>

### **William D. Ferguson and Blackfish Lake Ferry**

As noted previously, Lieutenant Thomas expected ferry licenses to be granted in December 1826 for bodies of water along the Military Road between Memphis and Strong's place. William D. Ferguson, a veteran of the War of 1812 and one of early Crittenden County's leading citizens, apparently received and held that license for some time. Crittenden County records show that the county court voted on July 12, 1830, "that a Ferry License be Granted William D. Ferguson to keep a Ferry across Blackfish at the Same rates of Tunage as heretofore allowed at his Ferry."<sup>26</sup>

Ferguson in 1829 acquired one of the first land grants for property in Crittenden County and had been appointed the county's first sheriff in 1825. He also served as postmaster at Greenock, a county seat established on land donated by his brother, Horatio N. Ferguson, in 1827 where court was held until the seat was moved to Marion ten years later. He also served as a representative in the 1829 Territorial Legislature and as a representative in the first, second and third General Assemblies after statehood. William Ferguson later sought permission to build a toll bridge across Blackfish Lake, but was rebuffed by the General Assembly in 1836 and 1837. Thus, the lake was still crossed by ferry when traversed during the Choctaw, Chickasaw and Cherokee removals.<sup>27</sup>

### **Choctaw Removal Along the Memphis to Little Rock Road**

Between 1786 and 1825, the Choctaw Nation and the United States government negotiated eight different treaties in which the Choctaws ceded rights to their ancestral lands in what is now the State of Mississippi. On October 27, 1830, a ninth treaty, the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek, surrendered remaining Choctaw claims in Mississippi, setting the stage for the tribe's removal to Indian Territory.<sup>28</sup> The first contingents of some 4,000 Choctaws set out under civilian leadership in November 1831, generally following land and/or water routes beginning from Memphis, Tennessee, or Vicksburg, Mississippi. None of these apparently utilized the Memphis to Little Rock Road in their travels. By March of 1832, 3,749 Choctaws were registered at four stations in Indian Territory.<sup>29</sup>

In an effort to cut costs and increase efficiency, the next removal contingents were placed under the authority of the U.S. Army. While they would again depart from Memphis and Vicksburg, at least part of the emigrating Choctaws would travel by the Memphis to Little Rock Road.<sup>30</sup> On September 26, 1832, the *Arkansas Gazette* ran an advertisement for sealed proposals for prospective suppliers of rations and forage for the removal parties, stating that some would move "from Memphis, Tennessee, via Strong's to Mouth of Cache on White River, A.T.", a route that would take them across Blackfish Lake at William Ferguson's Ferry. "The calculation at present," the *Gazette* article notes, "is that the Indians will reach the Mississippi by the 1<sup>st</sup> of November next."<sup>31</sup>

The Choctaws who rendezvoused at Memphis were split into two parties who would meet their fellow emigrants at Rock Roe on the White River. Though steamboats were available, many of the Indians were fearful of cholera and chose to travel overland under the command of Capt. William Armstrong. Following the Memphis to Little Rock Road, they entered a nightmarish landscape where fall flooding caused them to travel through knee- to waist-deep water for more than 30 miles. The parties consolidated at Rock Roe and by December 2, 1832, the last of the emigrants passed Little Rock. On December 5 the *Gazette* reported that

“about 1200 Indians and 80 wagons ... who came through the Mississippi swamp from Memphis, and who design locating in the vicinity of the Arkansas, are probably now within about 75 miles of Fort Smith.” By February 5, 1832, around 5,000 Choctaws were in Indian Territory at the conclusion of the second phase of removal. The final phase of removal in 1833 would not involve the use of the Memphis to Little Rock Road.<sup>32</sup>

### **Creek Removal Along the Memphis to Little Rock Road**

Seven Creek chiefs signed a treaty in Washington, D.C. in March 1832, ceding all of the traditional Creek lands east of the Mississippi River to the U.S. government, thus culminating decades of negotiations and intratribal factionalism regarding ownership of the Creek homelands.<sup>33</sup> It was reported that year that 2,500 members of the Creek tribe moved west, leaving 20,000 more to be removed.<sup>34</sup>

The first major contingent to move through Arkansas was a party of 630 Creeks under the command of Capt. John Page in 1834. The party originated in Alabama, but split in January at Memphis, with the majority boarding steamboats for transport via the Mississippi, Arkansas and White rivers while another party drove the group’s pony herd along the Memphis to Little Rock Road. Poor boating conditions caused the riverine travelers to take almost three weeks to reach Little Rock, where they stopped on February 24, 1835. They camped north of the Arkansas River to await the overland group under William Beattie of the Sanford Emigrating Company. The reunited party left the Little Rock area on March 1. Only 469 of the 630 Creeks in the Page party were alive when it reached Fort Gibson on March 28, 1835.<sup>35</sup>

A second party of 511 Creeks, conducted by Beattie but accompanied by Lt. Edward Deas of the U.S. Army, who sought to ensure the emigrants were properly supplied, left Alabama in December 1835. They reached Memphis and crossed the Mississippi on December 31. Again, the party split, with most traveling by boat as, Deas reported on January 1, 1836, “the Party with the Ponies were ... assembled opposite the town ... to proceed west through the Mississippi Swamp.” The Indians traveled by boat arrived near Little Rock on January 8 and five days later Deas reported that “the Party with the Ponies ... arrived within a quarter of a mile of this place this afternoon in good condition. This is the first time we have heard of them since leaving Memphis.” The group proceeded westward, arriving at Fort Smith on January 22 after delays caused by low water on the Arkansas River.<sup>36</sup>

Several parties of Creeks headed west in the fall of 1836, and a lack of transport led to some 13,000 Creeks bottlenecked at Memphis in October. These groups were led by Capt. M.W. Batman, Lt. R. B. Screven, Marine Lt. John T. Sprague, Deas, and John A. Campbell. Sprague sought to steal a march on Batman and Screven, who had arrived at Memphis before him, to ensure his party received adequate measures of the scanty supplies set out for the Creek emigrants. Sprague put 1,300 people, mostly women and children, aboard the steamboat *John Nelson* and two flat boats and sent between 600 and 700 men with the group’s horses along the Memphis to Little Rock Road through the Mississippi Swamp. Most of the overland group joined their river-borne companions opposite Little Rock on November 4, though many of the men stayed in the swamp to hunt bear. Sprague sent agents after these stragglers and brought them to the camps opposite Little Rock in mid-November. The Sprague party reached Fort Gibson on December 7, having lost only 29 people during the journey.<sup>37</sup>

Screven's party of 3,142 Creeks also split at Memphis, with most going to Rock Roe by boat while the horse herd followed the Memphis to Little Rock Road, arriving opposite Little Rock on November 20.<sup>38</sup>

Deas party, which numbered 2,320 when it left Alabama, set out from Memphis on November 5, 1836, intending to split as had the earlier groups. A sizeable group of Creeks refused to board the boats, choosing instead to follow the horse herd along the Memphis to Little Rock Road under the leadership of a conductor who Deas appointed. The water-borne party waited at Rock Roe, but only a portion of the overland party arrived with the conductor. After waiting two weeks, Deas set back toward Strong's place on the St. Francis River to round up the stragglers. He found 300-400 starving, stranded Creeks, some of whom had been with the parties of Batman and Screven, scattered along the route and arranged for their escort to join the rest of his band. Deas's main group arrived opposite Little Rock on November 27 and stayed there until December 9, allowing most of the stragglers to rejoin them. After moving three miles, he learned that another large group was still a few days behind him, so he again encamped until December 17. The Deas party finally arrived at Fort Gibson on January 23, 1837. His was the last major Creek removal party to travel the Memphis to Little Rock Road.<sup>39</sup>

### **Chickasaw Removal Along the Memphis to Little Rock Road**

On October 20, 1832, representatives of the Chickasaw Nation, under pressure from the U.S. government and white settlers anxious to move into the Chickasaw homelands in northern Mississippi and Alabama, signed the Treaty of Pontotoc in which the tribe ceded its property for sale as public land. The government would hold proceeds while tribe members decided where they wanted to move in the West.<sup>40</sup> An exploring party of 21 chiefs left Tusculum on October 16, 1833, crossing the Mississippi River at Memphis and then heading to Little Rock and on to Fort Towson – a journey that would have traversed the newly constructed Memphis to Little Rock Road.<sup>41</sup> Negotiations with the Choctaw Nation to procure western Choctaw land failed, as did similar parleys in November 1835. Finally, in January 1837 the Choctaw Nation sold a large strip in the western part of Choctaw lands in the Indian Territory for the use of the Chickasaw, also allowing the tribe to enjoy most of the privileges of Choctaw citizenship.<sup>42</sup>

On March 9, 1837, A. M. M. Upshaw of Pulaski, Tennessee, was appointed superintendent of the Chickasaw removal. Upshaw established three camps in the Chickasaw Nation, and on July 4 he led a party of some 500 emigrants to Memphis.<sup>43</sup> John M. Millard, assisted by W.R. Guy, Capt. Joe A. Phillips and Dr. C. G. Keenan, took over as the conductor of the party and crossed the Mississippi River to Arkansas.<sup>44</sup> Millard, expecting additional Chickasaws to join his group and awaiting anticipated rations, tarried on the Arkansas side for three days before heading west on the Memphis to Little Rock Road. On July 8, the party arrived at Blackfish Lake, with Millard recording in his journal:

*We moved this morning at 8 Oclk., and after having traveled five miles came to the termination of the newly constructed road, we found the Swamp almost impassible – All the wagons but two arrived at the lake. These were left on the road two miles distant from camp.*<sup>45</sup>

The party crossed Blackfish Lake on July 9, Millard reported:

*This day was passed in crossing the lake, bringing up the wagons, horses and Indians that were left on our yesterdays march. We also found it necessary to rest the horses after the fatiguing drive of the previous day (12 miles) through the swamp. – Black fish is distant from Memphis twenty five miles, its width is about one hundred and fifty yards – the water is clear and its surface smooth although there is a tolerably strong current, which empties into the St. Francis.*<sup>46</sup>

The Millard Party left Blackfish Lake on July 10 and apparently followed the Memphis to Little Rock Road to the crossing of the White River, though they might have deviated somewhat in heading further south to the Rock Roe bridge. They apparently rejoined the road, however, as they arrived at Mrs. Black's public house in modern-day Monroe County on July 22. Traveling some nine miles per day, the party of 516 Indians, 551 ponies and 13 wagons arrived at modern-day North Little Rock on July 24. The party split up there, with Millard, Morris and Keenan taking 150 Chickasaws and all of the baggage on board the steamer *Indian* for transport to Fort Coffee in the Indian Territory, Guy leading a party of 30 Chickasaws, 100 horses and two wagons by land for the same destination, and the remaining Chickasaws, led by chief Sealy, headed southwest, "determined to go by Red River and stop, when and where they pleased."<sup>47</sup>

After arriving at Fort Coffee on August 2, Millard returned to Little Rock and set out in pursuit of Sealy's detachment, finding "many of them very sick" only 35 miles from Little Rock. After battling a lack of provender and the depredations of horse thieves, the frustrated Millard finally threatened the slow-moving Chickasaws with the prospect of a full military escort if they did not follow his instructions. After much hardship, the remaining Chickasaws finally arrived in the Indian Territory and Millard left the party on September 10, 1837.<sup>48</sup>

Millard rejoined Upshaw in Memphis, where the latter had assembled some 4,000 additional Chickasaw emigrants, most of whom would travel west by steamboat. Millard led another party along the Memphis to Little Rock Road, leaving Memphis around December 3.<sup>49</sup> The winter journey was more difficult as the Millard Party encountered the same difficulties that had bested the road's builders 10 years earlier. A correspondent to the *Arkansas Gazette* wrote the newspaper on December 11, 1837, that:

Capt. John Millard, conductor of a party of Chickasaw Indians, reached Strong's last evening, with almost 300 Indians, 38 wagons, and 1100 Indian ponies. – The balance of his party, supposed to be from 700 to 800 in number, is still in the swamp, and will not reach here for some days owing to the desperate condition of the road. Capt. Millard thinks that not less than 70 or 80 Indian ponies have been bogged and left dead in the mud. This party will remain at this place for several days—indeed until the balance of the party comes up. The whole party of Indians, we understand, will come by the way of this place [Little Rock] – or rather, the opposite bank of the river."<sup>50</sup>

This party apparently followed the Military Road to Little Rock and would have traversed the section through today's Village Creek State Park. After arriving at Little Rock, Millard convinced some of his charges to take steamboats the rest of the way to the Choctaw Nation, while the remainder traveled overland with their horses and oxen.<sup>51</sup>



## **Cherokee Removal on the Memphis to Little Rock Road**

The Cherokees who had signed the Treaty of New Echota traveled separately from their fellow tribesmen in a detachment that mixed-blood Cherokee John Bell conducted and for which U.S. Army Lt. Edward Deas was chief administrator. This detachment of some 660 Indians left the emigrating depot at Fort Cass near Charleston, Tennessee, on October 10, 1838. It was the only Cherokee Removal detachment that would take the Military Road from the Mississippi River to Little Rock and beyond.<sup>52</sup>

Deas reported that the Bell Detachment had crossed the Mississippi by November 24, 1838, noting that he “shipped up the Arkansas River a considerable quantity of the Baggage, Potware &c. &c, on very low terms, which I think will result in a good deal of saving in time and expense.”<sup>53</sup> This report is the last known to survive from Deas during his travels with the Bell Detachment, but historian Duane King has assembled Deas’s expense vouchers from the National Archives, providing an account of where and when the Bell Detachment traveled along the Memphis to Little Rock Road.

Deas’s vouchers show that the party crossed Blackfish Lake on November 28, when he paid H.N. Ferguson to ferry the Cherokee across, indicating that William Ferguson either had turned the ferry over to his brother or that Horatio was managing the ferry.<sup>54</sup>

The Bell Detachment traveled 707 miles in 89 days and disbanded at Vinyard Post Office (present-day Evansville) in Washington County, Arkansas, on January 7, 1839. Twenty-one of the 660 Cherokee Indians who began the journey in Tennessee died en route.<sup>55</sup>

Though the ferry has long since been abandoned, the location of the Blackfish Lake Ferry Site remains apparent and is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A with statewide significance by virtue of its status as the sole known surviving ferry site along the Memphis to Little Rock Road traversed by the Bell Detachment during the Cherokee Removal. While this nomination does not address Criterion D, an initial archeological investigation located artifacts from the Trail of Tears period on the eastern side of the ferry crossing; further investigation may be warranted. Its association with the earlier Choctaw, Creek and Chickasaw Removals augment its importance, as does its role in the opening of eastern Arkansas as a means of westward emigration. The property is being submitted for National Register recognition under the multiple-property listing “Historic and Archeological Resources Associated with the Cherokee Trail of Tears.”

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## **9. Major Bibliographical References**

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### **Bibliography**

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

## Primary Location of Additional Data:

- ☒ State historic preservation office
- ☐ Other state agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other -- Specify Repository:

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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Name/Title: Mark Christ/Community Outreach DirectorOrganization: Arkansas Historic Preservation Program Date: February 21, 2003Street & Number: 1500 Tower Bldg., 323 Center St. Telephone: (501) 324-9880City or Town: Little Rock State: AR ZIP: 72201

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<sup>1</sup>Jennova Meals, "Paths of the Past: The Old Military Road in East Arkansas." Research Paper, 2.

<sup>2</sup> Julia Ward Longnecker, "A Road Divided: From Memphis to Little Rock Through the Great Mississippi Swamp." *Arkansas Historical Quarterly*, Vol. XLIV, No. 3 (Autumn, 1985) 205.

<sup>3</sup> Clarence E. Carter, comp. and ed., *Territorial Papers of the United States, XIX, Arkansas Territory, 1825-1829* (Washington, D.C., 1954) 768-769.

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<sup>4</sup> Carter, *Territorial Papers*, XX, 187-8.

<sup>5</sup> Meals, 4-6.

<sup>6</sup> *Arkansas Gazette*, July 25, 1826, p. 3, col. 2.

<sup>7</sup> Meals, 6-7.

<sup>8</sup> Carter, *Territorial Papers*, XX, 308.

<sup>9</sup> Carter, *Territorial Papers*, XX, 369; Duane King e-mail, July 8, 2002.

<sup>10</sup> Carter, *Territorial Papers*, XX, 369.

<sup>11</sup> Meals, 10.

<sup>12</sup> Longnecker, 210.

<sup>13</sup> Carter, *Territorial Papers*, XX, 570.

<sup>14</sup> Robert W. Chowing, *History of St. Francis County* (Forrest City, AR: Times-Herald Publishing Co., 1954), 8.

<sup>15</sup> Carter, *Territorial Papers*, XX, 585, 693.

<sup>16</sup> Longnecker, 210.

<sup>17</sup> Meals, 12.

<sup>18</sup> Longnecker, 206.

<sup>19</sup> Longnecker, 213.

<sup>20</sup> Longnecker, 213-4.

<sup>21</sup> Longnecker, 215-217.

<sup>22</sup> Meals, 15; S. Charles Bolton *Arkansas 1800-1860, Remote and Restless* (Fayetteville, AR: University of Arkansas Press, 1998) 43.

<sup>23</sup> Michael B. Dougan, *Arkansas Odyssey* (Little Rock, AR: Rose Publishing Co., 1994) 119; *Arkansas Gazette*, May 23, 1837, p. 2, col. 1.

<sup>24</sup> *Arkansas Gazette*, May 23, 1837, p. 2, col. 1.

<sup>25</sup> *Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Eastern Arkansas* (Chicago: The Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1890), 396.

<sup>26</sup> Crittenden County Records – County, Circuit and Probate Court Records Book “B” – 1826-1845. Microfilm copy, Arkansas History Commission.

<sup>27</sup> Goodspeed, 390-391; Margaret Elizabeth Woolfolk, *A History of Crittenden County, Arkansas* (Greenville, S.C.: Southern Historical Press, 1991) 140-141; Journal of the House of Representatives 1836-1837, microfilm copy, Arkansas History Commission.

<sup>28</sup> Arthur H. DeRosier, Jr. "The Choctaw Removal of 1831: A Civilian Effort" *Journal of the West* Vol. 6, April 1967, 237.

<sup>29</sup> Jordan H. Glenn, "Choctaw Colonization in Oklahoma" *Chronicles of Oklahoma*, Vol. 54, Spring, 1976, 27.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 27-29.

<sup>31</sup> *Arkansas Gazette*, September 26, 1832, cited at [http://www.anpa.ualr.edu/FT\\_Indian\\_Removal/Newspapers/FT\\_IR\\_Choctaw\\_3.htm](http://www.anpa.ualr.edu/FT_Indian_Removal/Newspapers/FT_IR_Choctaw_3.htm), downloaded October 20, 2002.

<sup>32</sup> Glenn, "Choctaw Colonization," 29-30; *Arkansas Gazette*, December 5, 1832, cited at [http://www.anpa.ualr.edu/FT\\_Indian\\_Removal/Newspapers/FT\\_IR\\_Choctaw\\_3.htm](http://www.anpa.ualr.edu/FT_Indian_Removal/Newspapers/FT_IR_Choctaw_3.htm), downloaded October 20, 2002.

<sup>33</sup> William J. Savage, Jr. "Creek Colonization in Oklahoma," *Chronicles of Oklahoma*, vol. 54, Spring 1976, 39-41.

<sup>34</sup> Information from [http://www.anpa.ualr.edu/FT\\_Indian\\_Removal/Site%20Reports/NLR/nlr\\_creek.htm](http://www.anpa.ualr.edu/FT_Indian_Removal/Site%20Reports/NLR/nlr_creek.htm) downloaded January 16, 2003 (referred to hereafter as ANPA Creek Report).

<sup>35</sup> ANPA Creek Report.

<sup>36</sup> ANPA Creek Report; Gaston Litton, ed. "The Journal of a Party of Emigrating Creek Indians, 1835-36," *The Journal of Southern History*, vol. 7, May 1941, 235,237.

<sup>37</sup> ANPA Creek Report.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> Grant Foreman, *Indian Removal: The Emigration of the Five Civilized Tribes of Indians* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1972), 197.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 199.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 202-203.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 204-6.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 206.

<sup>45</sup> J.M. Millard Journal, September 23, 1837, copy supplied by Dr. Dan Littlefield, University of Arkansas at Little Rock.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>47</sup> Foreman, 207-9.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 209-12.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 213-4.

Blackfish Lake Ferry Site  
Name of Property

St. Francis County, Arkansas  
County and State

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<sup>50</sup> *Arkansas Gazette*, December 19, 1837, downloaded June 26, 2002, from [http://www.anpa.ualr.edu/FT-Indian\\_Removal/Newspapers/FT\\_IR\\_Chickasaws.htm](http://www.anpa.ualr.edu/FT-Indian_Removal/Newspapers/FT_IR_Chickasaws.htm)).

<sup>51</sup> Foreman, 214.

<sup>52</sup> Duane King, "The Emigration Route of the John A. Bell Detachment of Treaty Party Cherokees within the State of Arkansas, November 25, 1838 – January 7, 1839," Research Paper, 2001, 4.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 28-9; copies of vouchers from National Archives supplied by Duane King.

<sup>55</sup> King, "Emigration Route, 4.